DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 433 973 RC 020 430

AUTHOR	Doolas, Jena
TITLE	Annotated Bibliography: Literature (Fiction & Non-Fiction) for Children about Central, South American and Caribbean Region.
PUB DATE	1995-09-00
NOTE	22p.; On cover: "NAES College, HT499."
PUB TYPE	Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	American Indians; Annotated Bibliographies; Educational Strategies; Elementary School Curriculum; Family Life; Fiction; Foreign Countries; Immigrants; Intermediate Grades; *Latin American Culture; *Latin American History; Latin Americans; *Social Studies
IDENTIFIERS	Caribbean; Central America; South America

ABSTRACT

This bibliography was compiled to help solve the problem of finding a variety of books about Central and South America and the Caribbean Region for Hispanic sixth graders. The bibliography includes both nonfiction books appropriate for use in a social studies research component and fiction books appropriate for a reading program. One video is included as well. The bibliography grew out of the idea of integrating the study of the ancient Americas with reading and writing. After reading some of the books, students would write their own family stories, making connections between their heritage and their present. The main section of the bibliography describes 15 books and 1 video. Entries also identify appropriate grade level. The books were published 1952-93, mostly in the 1990s, and include historical materials, and fictional and nonfictional portraits of family life among Latin Americans--Hispanic, indigenous, or immigrant. A second section includes 22 additional books for students without annotations and 16 more books concerned with teaching strategies. (CDS)

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Annotated Bibliography: Literature (fiction & non-fiction) for Children about Central, South American and Caribbean Region

by

Jena Doolas

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September, 1995

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Annotated Bibliography: Literature (fiction & non-fiction) for Children about Central, South America and Caribbean Region
by Jena Doolas

During the 1994-1995 school year I was student teaching sixth grade in a Chicago Magnet Public School. Generally these Options for Knowledge schools are directed around a theme--Sabin Magnet School is a bilingual school, Spanish and English. The student population is primarily Hispanic American, Latino and Puerto Rican. I was to assume responsibility for the Writing and Reading, and the Social Studies programs for one sixth grade class. Before I sat down to piece together the required curriculum, I imagined another curriculum that I would've loved to have introduced. Unfortunately the year's curriculum had been planned and I (and the students) had to make do with what was offered.

Ancient civilizations is what sixth graders study. What a perfect way to address our students' histories, many of whom come from Central and South America as well as the Caribbean region. To study the Ancient Americas would have been ideal, especially if I could make connections between the past and the present peoples and cultures. Unfortunately the curriculum included the ancient civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Israelites, India and China--not the Ancient Americas.

Nveretheless I thought about integrating Social Studies, study of Ancient Americas, with Reading and Writing. The reading component would include literature for children about Central and South America, and the Caribbean region. The writing would include student's own stories and family stories-- perhaps where contemporary cultural flavor would shine through. In this way students would begin making connections between their ancient past and their present. Students would be introduced to contemporary Mayan characters, or contemporary South or Central American Indians and others. Students would become aware of history as a continuum that has its most recent connections to themselves.

The ancient Aztecs, Mayans and Incans have been well researched, or at least there is a lot of information available. The same cannot be said for the less ominous groups, or for their contemporaries. If I were to implement the above program I knew I would have a problem locating enough of a variety of books for the sixth graders to read. So I began looking for and reading books that would be appropriate for a Reading Workshop. I discovered many

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more books than anticipated. That is how this annotated bibliography came about.

Included in this bibliography are books to be used in a research component for social studies as well as fiction books for a reading program. By no means is this a closed document. All the time new books are being published and more and more stories are being told and rewritten. Although I am a swift reader, I am not swifter than the pile of books growing along my desk. At the end of this bibliography are titles of some books of which I am aware but not had a chance to read.

I hope this is helpful to all curious minds--teachers and learners alike.

General books of the Ancient Americas

Baquedano, Elizabeth. Aztec, Inca and Maya. NY: Alfred A. Knopf, 1993.
Reading Level: 3rd grade and up. Non-Fiction.

Aztec, Inca and Maya is full of visual treats. It is a collage of images from these three ancient civilizations as well as a collage of little bits of information easily digested by students who are acquiring a base knowledge of the Ancient Americas. It can be used as reference from which more in depth research can begin. It offers a survey view, giving a taste of what these peoples were like. Because there are a variety of vivid and detailed photographs, students do not have to spend all their time reading to glean some insight on the people they are studying.

Norton, Jonathon. Ancient America. NY: Time Incorporated, 1967.
Reading Level: 6th grade and up. Non-Fiction.

This book is a good general research book for older students. Like many Time/Life books in a series its format is basic, giving a survey of information. The following is the Table of Contents to give an idea of the material covered:

1. THE EARLIEST AMERICANS
Picture Essay: A group Portrait
2. THE GREAT STONE CITIES
Picture Essay: A Race of Master Builders
3. AN AGE OF WARRIOR-KINGS
Picture Essay: The Legend of Eight-Deer
4. HIGH CULTURE IN THE ANDES

Picture Essay: "Sweat of the Sun"
5. GODS AND EMPIRES
Picture Essay: Staging an Awesome Pageant
6. TRIUMPHS OF NATIVE GENIUS
Picture Essay: The Indian Engineers
7. HORSEMEN FROM THE SEA
Picture Essay: The Aztecs' Orderly Society
8. THE DEATHLESS HERITAGE
Picture Essay: A People's Pride

Pohl, John M. and Angus McBride. Aztec, Mixtec and Zapotec Armies. London: Osprey Publishing, Ltd., 1991.
Reading Level: Fifth Grade and up. Non-Fiction, Men-at-arms, Mexico and Central America.

> As chiefs became more powerful and society became more highly stratified full-time armies began to develop, leading to the emergence of ever-prepared warrior nations. The close relationship between warfare, political domination and the acquisition of wealth inherent in tribute and agricultural labour became logically bound to Precolumbian religion. This was manifested through an idealogical emphasis on the capture of prisoners for sacrifice dedicated to the promotion of agicultural fertility--the ultimate statement of national wellbeing.
> (4)

Although this book talks about war among the Aztec, Mixtec and Zapotec peoples, do not expect a blood and guts story. This is a serious analysis, with contributions from many researchers, of war in its fundamental role in the mesoamerican states.

This book focuses on one important aspect of the development of mesoamerican life--that of warfare. First it discusses how the Aztecs came to power by examining the Classic period (AD 200-1000) then the Post classic period when the Toltecs rose to power. This account gives the reader the knowledge and the sense of history as a revolving door. The first section continues to describe the logistics, movement, command and organization, uniforms and weaponry, battle tactics, urban warfare, and policy in victory of the Triple Alliance. It then discusses more briefly the Aztec-Chichimec alliance and the wars between the two. The text is interspersed with images from the codices, photos of various ruins, and maps.

The Mixtec and Zapotec are described in the remainder of the book. They are discussed in terms of their contact with the Aztec armies. Throughout all this we come to see how towns grew and fell;

how lifestyles evolved from nomadic to farming communities; the importance of religion. Although the book focuses on war, its message weighs heavily on how war, politics, religion, agirculture, games and lifestyle are interelated.

Central America/Mayan

Buss, Fran Leeper and Daisy Cubias. Journey of the Sparrows. NY: Dell Yearling Book, 1991.
Reading Level: Fifth Grade and Up. Realistic Fiction. Central America.

From the start of Journey of the Sparrows you are grabbed by Maria's story. Cramped tight into a pitch dark crate you travel from some unknown place beneath the border between Mexico and the United States, to a very familiar place-- if you live in Chicago. This story does four things: it bridges the gap between ancient cultures that collide and contemporary cultures that collide; it bridges the gap between an unfamiliar place and a familiar place; it bridges the gap between the secret lives of immigrants who are considered "the other" and the ordinary lives of people we normally have contact with; and finally it bridges the gap between fiction and non-fiction.

Although there are many lessons in this book, first and foremost, it emphasizes that each of us has a story to tell about our journey in this life. This helps foster feelings that if we listen and respect others we can come to identify our similarities. A young woman who reads this book can identify with that first blush caused by the romantic attention of a young man--no matter where she is from. And we have all seen the one neighborhood homeless person that we wish to help but haven't because of fear. And many of us know what it feels like to go out on a limb for someone we love.

In these ways we identify with Maria and her older sister Juilia who endure a torturous journey to begin a new life in the strange American city--Chicago. They seek to make a living while trying to remain invisible so the authorities won't find them and send them back to El Salvador. This is something we may never personally experience, but by connecting with Maria's sensitive and poignant impressions, we feel her confusion, and wonder why these things are happening to her.

Thinking critically about events worldwide is a process that I believe this book can spark: Why is this happening? Why are people being killed in their own countries? Why do people like you

and me have to turn into "Illegal Aliens" just to live? How and when did all this start? How does the study of history enlighten us about the study of the present?

Castaneda, Omar S. Among the Volcanoes. NY: Dell Publishing, 1991
Reading Level: Fifth Grade and Up. Realistic Fiction.
Guatemala, Mayan.

> Allan Waters seemed to understand Manuela perfectly. He walked with a frown. "I hate these people who hang on here," he said, not really caring who heard him and more interested in venting his anger than in carrying on a dialogue with any of the Pacays. "These people cause more damage than they realize. And they think that they're somehow more spiritual or closer to Guatemalans by acting like this. They not only steal part of the market from the natives, but they ruin the traditions by forcing rapid changes...When foreigners come here, they naturally like the things that these foreigners make more than they like the traditional things. After all, they're from the same culture and their sense of beauty is similar. So what happens is that the natives have to change their styles to compete."
> Castaneda, pg. 137

Among the Volcanoes is mostly a story about two things coming together and either clashing, melding or changing. Take your pick of the things you think this story is about: traditional ways and modern ways; men and women; childhood and adulthood; natives and foreigners; modern medicine and traditional remedies; military and guerrillas; them and us. Forget that it takes place in Guatemala and you have a universal story about the relationship of things in our everchanging world.

Isabel is a young Mayan girl, living in a small Guatemalan village. Her dreams conflict with what is expected of her as the oldest daughter in a traditional Mayan family. Isabel dreams of nothing but becoming educated in order to be a teacher. But with the impending death of her mother who is ill and the promise of marrying a traditional man, Isabel's attention must be turned towards domestic and traditional gender roles.

Allan Waters is an American who comes to Isabel's village. His mission is to help doctors understand the needs of Mayan patients. He proposes that pictures of the symptoms of illnesses will help

bridge the language barrier between native speakers and foreign language speakers. But the town refuses him, particularly in view of the political unrest between the military and the guerrillas. Everyone is suspiscious of things that are new and people that reek of change.

With Isabel as the hub of a wheel, the story moves in and out of her thoughts and confusions about growing up, falling in love, wanting what she cannot have, and coming to accept help from outside her world. Some of the things she experiences, love, for instance are things that people worldwide can understand. Other things, such as her conflict between living a traditional life and choosing education is foreign to people living in places where education is mandatory through a certain age. The political unrest that occurs in her small village grounds the reader in reality, because the things you read about here, are the very events that become the 10 O'Clock news.

Connections between pre-columbian Maya and modern Guatemala can be made when reading and inquiring about history as a continuum. Among the Volcanoes is a book worth reading--to help us understand a certain part of the word better, as well as to help us understand that we all experience similar things. We are very different yet very much the same.

Clark, Ann Nolan. Santiago. NY: The Viking Press, 1955.
Reading Level: Sixth Grade and Up. Historical Fiction. Central America.

Meet the Indian, Santiago. And meet the Guatamalan lady Tia Alicia who has taken him under her auspices. Meet the gringos who make Santiago's life their business and also meet the Ladinos whose lives travel the middle ground between Spanish and Indian lifestyles. Santiago is a book in which all the worlds that have come to make Guatemala their home, converge and diverge. However, it is through the mind of Santiago, the boy, that we live full circle the struggle of knowing where one belongs.

As in The Secret of the Andes a boy sets off on a personal quest to find what is truly in his heart. How much of his heart has remained Indian and how much of his heart wants to be Indian out in the world. The main struggle is how does one do this? How does one make a new path in this new world?

For ten years Santiago is raised by Tia Alicia who is a descendant of a proud family of Spain. Santiago's Indian parents have died and in this "foreign" home, Santiago loses the sense and

ways of his own people. And then he turns twelve. Out of the hills an old clansman comes to claim him. The clansman says it is Santiago's destiny to become a buren-bearer.

Santiago's story begins here. His life becomes the journey of how he makes his own path, using the Indian ways and the desires to forge into the modern world. Santiago will give you another perspective on the coming together of different worlds.

Jenness, Aylette and Lisa W. Kroeber. A Life of Their Own. An Indian Family in Latin America. NY: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1975.
Reading Level: Fifth Grade and up. Non-Fiction. Central America.

Pasan adelante! Turning the pages of this photodocumentary is like opening the door on a new place in the world. Aylette Jenness and Lisa Kroeber not only introduce us to a family in Guatemala, but they also introduce us to what it's like to make a book, the Spanish language, Indian crafts, the Indian and *Ladino* communities, and what it means to investigate and meet new people. But their primary goal is to help us undertand some aspects of contemporary Indian life in Latin America.

When you read A Life of their Own, you will find that the book is in three sections. The first is called "Del Libro--About the Book". It is designed to lead us into the Indian world and to make us aware of the reality of the Indians. We recognize cultural differences and acknoweldge the problems and pleasures they bring. The second part of the book is "La Familia Hernandez--The Hernandez Family". It is here we meet the Hernandezes and become familiar with their daily activities. It is through this family that life in the village is also portrayed. We get a glimpse of Indian culture, craftwork, agriculture, trade, transportation, education, local government, public health, and religion.

If all this is not enough we get to gain experiential knowledge of some of these things in the third part of the book called "Taller--Workshop". It is here that we actually do some of the things that we have seen the Hernandezes do:

> Welcome to the workshop. As we told you in the beginning, this book is something you can use to understand and to start to feel a little of what it's like to be an Indian in Latin America. You could think of these last pages as a shop full of hammers, nails, saws, wire, and glue from which you can construct

your own understandings. These tools, together with the ones you already have--your mind and your body--can be used anywhere--at home, at school, or in a playground with your friends.
(89)

This is not a book that asks you just to read. By picking up A Life of Their Own you embark on an adventure; where it takes you is up to you. You can begin getting the feel of speaking Spanish, for it introduces useful Spanish words and includes a short vocabulary in the back of the book. While reading about the Hernandezes you may be sparked to do your own photodocumentary on your family or your own experiences. This book offers a full range of experiences that connects you to another part of the world.

Temple, Frances. Grab Hands and Run. NY: Harper Trophy--Harper Collins Publishers, 1993.
Reading Level: Fifth grade and up. Historical fiction. El Salvador.

"I want to go back, Mama."
It's out. I've imagined saying it so many times, I'm not sure now that I've really spoken. Mama is very still. Finally she looks up, her face small and pinched. She doesn't waste time asking why.
"Jacinto told us to go to Canada."
"But he might need my help, Mama."
"If he had wanted you to stay, he would have told me, 'Leave Felipe with Rafa.' But no. He said, 'Take the children and go to Canada.' That is what Jacinto said." Her voice breaks, and tears well up in her eyes, but she keeps looking at me anyway, as if daring me to turn away.
"It's my place, Mama. El Salvador. I want to go back."
"They will make a soldier of you, Felipe. Or a courier for the Muchachos. Either way you'll become a killer, and either way you will almost surely be killed. You are Salvadoran, yes. But you are not old enough to help El Salvador yet."
(144-145)

Frances Temple paints a family portrait and behind this portrait of love, caring and universal sense of community is a demon. This demon tears people apart and tears people from their homes. This demon fights for power at the expense of the people over which they want to rule. But the loss of lives is nothing compared to the gain in money down the road. No matter how diligently the people fight or

how secretly they carry out plans no one is safe. This is what ultimately causes Paloma and her children to leave El Salvador. This is what makes them runaways, illegals, and unwanted anywhere south of Canada.

Reading Grab Hands and Run we walk a fine line between what we have learned is right--following the laws of our country-- and discovering that these laws are wrong and to survive we have to break them. We learn that not everyone who leads a country has the peoples' best interests in mind. We begin to learn to stand up for our beliefs and not to take for granted all that has been laid out as law. This book begins to teach the asking of critical questions about the conventions and laws made and followed.

This is an excellent book told from the point of view of a young boy. His doubts about even what his mother is doing surface and as an adult reading this, I recalled periods in my life when I could not tell what was right or wrong. This is not a fairy tale and it's not a book of guidance. Open Grab Hands and Run and you open a Pandora's box of confusion about how in this day and age barbaric manipulation of people exists; and as an American you confront the xenophobia that guides our government and people. This can be seen today with the passing and encouragement of Prop. 187.

Video

Bowen, Samuel P. The New Explorers: Voices in the Stones U.S Department of Energy through Argonne National Laboratory, 1994.
28.10 minutes. Maya.

This is a Video tape on loan from the Field Museum. Acompanying the video is a teacher's guide and teaching materials. These materials include:

*background materials and references
*suggested activities and lessons for use before the videotape
*the videotape for showing in classroom
*notes for discussion when the videotape is shown
*suggested classroom activities following the tape
*suggested activites in preparation for a field trip to the museum
*field trip activities and instructions

The following is the table of Contents:

OVERVIEW
1. Introduction to Archaeology

2. Map Activities
3. The Time of the Maya
4. Everyday Life of the Ancient Maya
5. The Cycle of Life
6. The Maya Look
7. Weaving: A Maya Tradition
8. Maya Gods and Deities
9. Comparative study of the Maya and the Greeks
10. Math of the Maya
11. The puzzle of the Maya Hieroglyphs
12. The Living Maya

I'm not one for activity this and activity that so I am not very interested in the teaching materials provided with this video tape. But the tape itself is extremely dignified and approaches both the subject material and the viewers with respect and maturity. Both Bill Kurtis and Linda Schiele exude true interest and wonder at the treasures that surround them at Copan.

There are no gimics here. It is actual scientists and achaeologists working, speaking and discussing problems and possible solutions for the many mysteries that confront them during their digs.

Although the tape is about digging and the Maya and their history and how it can be unscrambled and understood or not, the tape also focuses on Ms. Schiele as a human being suddenly fascinated by a new world. She used to be an artist (and still is). She speaks about her view of art and how it differs from how she thinks her culture (America) views art in the world. When she and her husband went to Palenque she immediately found a kinship with a group of people--albeit not from her time--who defined their world through art, much like we define ours through science.

Another thing she addresses is the question of how do you understand a cuture from a thousand years ago with the logic we have today? How do you really know what they intended by their language? And that is what she tries to answer everyday. In fact the video ends with a sense of wonder inviting all viewers to ask, after all the hard work of deciphering messages from so long ago, what do you do when you realize the messages were not intended for you?

Aztec

Wahl, Jan. The Cucumber Princess. Maryland: Stemmer House, 1981
Reading Level: All ages. Mythology/Fairytale. Aztec influenced.

This is a contemporary fairytale inspired by Aztec art. I am not sure that the subject of the story is in accordance with Aztec philosophy. But the artwork indeed looks inspired by ancient Aztec "art". As in many fairytales an unusual thing occurs one ordinary day. And out of this unusual thing which is an egg, hatches a little girl. She eventually grows up to be a princess and influences much of the kingdom in a happily-ever after kind of way.

This book would be an inspirational tool for students who do want to create their own artwork and narrative based on one of the Central, South or Caribbean cultures--be it a contemporary story or an ancient one. The fact that the storyline might or might not be Aztec influenced could easily spark an exploration of what an Aztec, or Mayan, or Incan, etc., storyline might be. In order to do this students would need to research about beliefs, language, use of language and philosophy.

INCAN/PERU

Clark, Ann Nolan. Secret of the Andes. 1952. N.p.: Troll Associates, 1980.
Reading Level: Fifth grade and up. Realistic Fiction. Peru--Inca.

"Grieve not if your searching circles."

Have you ever gone to look for something you desperately wanted, only to discover your search brings you back to where you started; back to your beginning? This is what happens to Cusi, a modern Inca boy living high in the mountains of the Andes.

He lives with Chuco, an older man, his teacher, and a herder. They live high in the mountains and Cusi has never seen other people. But he senses there is something to know about other people. And in time, as he grows older, he yearns for this something. He looks out over the valley into a world he knows can offer him fulfillment. He is not quite sure for what he is searching...perhaps it is the love of a family.

But there is more to Cusi's story than his journey for love. It is a story that includes a journey for a sacred past.

Cusi's ancestors are a special people. And in spite of, and because of, his search into the world, Cusi comes to understand that his life is more unique than he had ever imagined. Cusi is Nobility, son of the last mighty Inca, and before he vows to carry on the tradition of keeping his history safe, he must be sure he is ready for this destiny. Going away will help him see that there is nothing Outside worthy of giving up his past.

I, Cusi, son of the Ancients,
Son of Nobility,
Son of Royalty,
Son of the Last Mighty Inca,
I, Cusi, Shepherd boy of Peru,
Make my sacred, my lasting, my irrevocable
vow...

This is a beautiful story about a people who have adapted to modern life while keeping sacred their ancient glory. The Secret of the Andes is a book that connects the past with the present and shows that the Inca are a people looking into the future while preserving their past.

Pitkanen, Matti A. The Grandchildren of the Incas Minneapolis: Carolrhoda Books, Inc. , 1991.
Reading Level: Fourth Grade and up. Non-Fiction. Inca and Peru.

> There is a legend that long ago the sun sent two of his children to earth to start a new civilization. It is said that the brother and sister rose out of the waters of Lake Titicaca, high in the Andes Mountains of South America. They settled in The Cuzco Valley in what would one day be Peru. This was the beginning of a great people that would come to be known as the Incas.

In modern times we call these people who lived high in the Andes Mountains, Incas. But these people called themselves "the People of the Four Quarters". The name Inca was used to describe their leader and his nobles. When the Spanish came and conquered the People of the Four Quarters they changed many things and assumed that the word Inca described all the people. So in modern times Inca refers to all the people who were part of the Inca Empire a long time ago. Today their ancestors are called the Quechua Indians.

As you read about Jose and Tomas, or Jaime and his father, and gaze at the vivid colorful photographs, you will come to learn about two sets of people. These people are the Quechua and the Incas. When you read this book you will meet some people who are descendants of the Incas. These people are modern Quechua Indians and like their ancestors they live in the mountains of Peru and Bolivia.

For hundreds of years the Incas farmed the mountain soil and because of the difficult terrain their farming methods became advanced. The Quechua Indians still make their living by farming. They also make their living by herding sheep, llamas or alpaca. Have you ever worn a sweater made with alpaca wool?

While reading you will discover that many of the things the Quechua do, eat, and wear are similar to what we do, eat and wear. But many things are very old and come from Inca Tradition. You will learn about some of these things, as well as how tradition mixes with modern, to give people unique ways of living.

Read The Grandchildren of The Incas along with the Secret of the Andes to enrich your understanding of what it is like to be a child in the mountains of Peru.

CARIBBEAN

Dorris, Michael. Morning Girl. NY: Hyperion Paperbacks for Children, 1992
Reading Level: Fourth Grade and up. Historical Fiction. Caribbean.

> The name my family calls me is Morning Girl because I wake up early, always with something on my mind. Mother says it's because I dream too hard, and that I don't relax even in sleep. Maybe she's right--in my dreams I'm always doing things: swimming or searching on the beach for unbroken shells or figuring out a good place to fish. I open my eyes as soon a the light calls through the smoke hole in the roof, sift the ideas that have come to me in the nght and decide which one to follow first.
> (1-2)

At first I thought this book was about me: I always get up early and with something on my mind. My dreams are so deep that it is difficult for me to get out from under them. But it's not often that I search out a good fishing hole, or good luck trying to find unbroken shells in Chicago! And besides what is a smoke hole in the roof? Who is Morning Girl?

Usually the story of Columbus' "discovery" is told from a European perspective. Not in Morning Girl. This story begins with the words from a young teen-age Taino Indian living on a Bahamian Island in 1492. Morning Girl is partly told from her point of view, almost like a journal you or I might keep. She tells about her family and the troubles she has with her brother, Star Boy. I wonder how he got his name?

Morning Girl is also partly told by Star Boy and he tells a story like a poet:

> What I don't like is nothing. I don't mean I like everything, because I don't. I don't like it when my sister wakes me up. I don't like to eat fish with too many bones. I don't like those hungry bugs so small you don't know they're there until they bite you. But mostly I don't like...nothing. You know: *nothing*. I don't like it when there's nothing to hear, nothing to taste, nothing to touch, especially when there's nothing to see. Those times, I don't know where I am. (8)

Through their voices and thoughts Morning Girl and Star Boy help us see a bit of their lives on the island. They play and they work. There are neighbors and there is solitude. And though the time and place is very far from our own, they are people like us--and they hold their own story of what happened as they see unusual ships approaching their home.

Not much is said about Columbus in this account. Reading the epilogue will help you put the puzzle together. What does this perspective about the discovery of America tell us?

Jacobs, Francine. The Tainos. The People Who Welcomed Columbus.
NY: G.P. Putnam' Sons, 1992.
Reading Level: Sixth Grade and up. Non-Fiction. History, Caribbean.

Read this book after you have read Morning Girl and the awe you will feel about the dawning of America will not be celebratory. When you read this book you just want to ask "How can people who know right from wrong get away with exterminating a whole race of people and not know that it is horrendously wrong?". The answer is I don't know but it happens more than I care to think about it.

Francine Jacobs tells you a story about a people we barely know. And as she leads you along their migratory path you gear up to hear the rest of the story. You want to know more about Tainos and Arawaks. You want to know why many of the people who come

from the Greater Antilles do not have Taino blood. You are actually intrigued by the mystery.

But the mystery is nothing like you imagined. It is unbelievable. One million people obliterated because of greed, power and aggression. The mystery is the other story of what Columbus and his people did when they collided with America.

Strasser, Todd. The Diving Bell. NY: Scholastic, 1992.
Reading Level: Fifth Grade and up. Historical Fiction, Caribbean.

> Culca followed hin into the church. The friar lit some candles. "Which book do you want to see?"
> "The one with the pictures," Culca said.
> The friar took the book down from the shelf. Culca quickly turned the pages until she found what she was searching for.
> "Look, Friar," she said, pressing her finger down on the page.
> The friar scowled. "I see drawings of men wearing masks."
> "Underwater masks, Friar," Culca said. "If the divers wear these, they won't drown."
> (84)

Would you have ever thought that the drawings of Leonardo Da Vinci would help a group of divers in the Caribbean? Whether this is absolute truth or not, The Diving Bell will appeal to those in for adventure and drama.

Culca lives on an island off the Yucatan. Her ancestors were part of the great Mayan civilization. Culca's time is that not too far after Columbus and the Spaniards came to spread Christianity and find gold in the "new world". Culca's people were very good divers and the Spanish took advantage of their abilities whenever a treasure had been lost at sea.

Culca is no ordinary girl, especially in her village. She would rather be diving all day than tend to the domestic duties expected of her. Her drive to go against the grain leads her to use the friar's book of Da Vinci's drawings to invent a diving bell which will prevent her brother and others from perishing in the deep waters.

This story is not as well written as many of the other stories, but its appeal lies in the ingenuity and story of invention. It captures some of the indignities people had to endure, but the essence of the story relies on true grit and family loyalty.

Temple, Frances. Taste of Salt, A Story of Modern Haiti. NY: Harper Collins Publishing, 1991.
Reading Level: Sixth grade and up. Historical fiction, Haiti.

> Pe Pierre has a box full of books that he uses to teach the letters and the words. These books are called Taste Salt.
>
> The name makes me remember a story my mama told us...How if a person dies, and their body is stolen by a zombie master, the zombie master will make the body rise and work all day and all night as a slave. The zombie understands only his suffering. He has no power to break away. He can only work and work...But there is one little trick that can save the zombie...If the zombie can get a taste of salt, he will understand. He will open his true eyes and see that he has been made a zombie. And he will turn against his master. He will obey him no longer. He will make himself free...one day I see why the books be called Taste Salt. Is because that is what being able to read and write is like. You understand things you didn't before.
>
> 26-27

These are the introspective thoughts of Djo, a young man in a hospital bed. Djo tells his story to Jeremie a young girl with a tape recorder who stays at the bedside of this boy at the bidding of Jean-Bertrand Aristide. They each have a story to share and "Titid" believes this sharing will bring a wave of change.

The story takes place over a period of 3 or so years about 1986 in Haiti and Santo Domingo. Djo is a poor boy who has moved into the streets, thieving to survive and mingling with other boys like him. Father Jean-Bertrand Aristide befriends them and cares for them. And in turn they become part of his election team.

But Djo is kidnapped and made a slave in the suger cane fields in Santo Domingo. His life is full of hard lessons and unfair truths. We come to hear about it all after he has escaped and been involved in a political firebombing. From his hospital bed he reweaves his story for Jeremie.

And Jeremie blooms like a flower each day she learns more about this beaten man. He goes into a coma and then it is her turn to use her voice and own story to pull him back to her. Both of them are fighting individual battles of prejudice, poverty, justice and freedom. They are also fighting the desire to "climb out of the slums of Port-au-Prince" as opposed to fighting for a new vision for Haiti.

Aristide's dream is to interlock the stories of people like Jeremie and Djo in order to create a solidarity among people.

Without connections Haiti will continue to be a broken nation; fighting factions and wounding wounds.

Taste of Salt offers the reader a tangible and compassionate view of what is happening in Haiti. It offers up voices of resistance, that demand an audience. The words slip into your heart and your mind; the words are salt and "you understand things you didn't before."

ADDITIONAL BOOKS

Augenbraum, Harold, ed. Growing Up Latino Memoirs and Stories. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993.

Bernier-Grand, Carmen. Juan Bobo. Four Folktales from Puerto Rico. NY: Harper Trophy--HarperCollins Publishers,1994.
Reading Level: Grade Two and up. Folktales.

Gemming, Elizabeth. Lost City in the Clouds. The Discovery of Machu Picchu. NY: Coward, McCann and Geoghegan, Inc., 1980.
Reading Level: 5th grade and up. Biography.

Gerson, Mary Joan. People of the Corn. (incomplete information)
Reading Level: Pre-school to Grade 3. A Mayan Story.

Jordan, Martin and Tanis. Angel Falls. Ny: Kingfisher, 1995.
Reading Level: Everyone. A picture book; a South American Journey.

Krensky, Beth, ed. A Piece of Peace: Kids Share Their Lives through Poetry, Art & Photography. MA: Font and Center Press, 1995.
Reading Level: Fifth Grade and up.

Paulsen, Gary. Sisters; Hermanas. NY: Harcourt Brace & Company, 1993.
Reading Level: Sixth grade and up.

Rodirguez, Luis J., Always Running, La Vida Loca: Gang Days in L.A. CT: Curbstone Press, 1993.
Reading Level: 8th grade and up. Biography.

Rohmer, Harriet and Mary Anchondo. How we came to the Fifth World. 1976. San Franciso, CA: Children's Book Press, 1988.
Reading Level: 3rd grade and up. Mythology.

Soto, Gary. A Summer Life. NY: Dell Publishing, 1990.

Reading Level: 6th grade and up. Young Adult Anthology

. . . Baseball in April. San Diego: HB&C, 1990.
Reading Level: 6th grade and up. Fiction.

. . . Living up the Street. NY: Dell Publishing, 1985.
Reading Level: 6th Grade and up. Narrative recollections.

. . . Cat's Meow. NY: Scholastic Books, 1995.
Reading Level: Third grade and up. Fiction--Hispanic American.

St. John, Jetty. A Family in Peru. Minneapolis: Lerner Publications Company, 1987.
Reading Level: 3rd to 5th grade. Non-fiction, biographical. Inca

Talbert, Marc. Heart of a Jaguar. NY: Simon & Schuster, 1995.
Reading Level: Sixth Grade and up.. Fiction, Folktale, Maya.

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Reading Level: 6th grade and up. Non-fiction and fiction.

Temple, Francis. Tonight by Sea. NY: Orchard Books, 1995
Reading Level: 6th grade and up. Historical Fiction--Haiti

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Reading Level: Sixth Grade and up. Fiction--Mexican Amercan Girl.

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Reading Level: 6th Grade and up. Non-Fiction and Fiction.

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Reading Level: Fourth Grade and up.

Wilkes, Sybella. One day we had to Run! Refugee children tell their Stories in Words and Paintings. CN: The Millbrook Press, 1994.

Reading Level: Sixth Grade and up. Ethiopia, Somalia & Sudan.

Wolf, Bernard. Beneath the Stone: A Mexican Zapotec Tale. NY: Orchard Books, 1994.
Reading Level: 3rd grade and up. Non-Fiction.

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